



Norton College

Curriculum Policy

Approved by: Ian Hardicker

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Policy Statement

As an Independent School, Norton College upholds the Independent School Standards (2014). We deliver a curriculum which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education. As a school offering Alternative Provision for pupils of compulsory school going age our curriculum offers subjects and learning activities that parallel those on the National Curriculum. This policy outlines the school curriculum: its principles; the values behind it; its delivery; monitoring and review.

Our Pupils

Our pupils are all referred to us by the Local Authority s because they have not managed to cope in Local Authority schools. Roughly 65% of our pupils have a diagnosis of Autism or ASD, ADHD, PDA or attachment and anxiety issues. Pupils usually meet at least one of the following characteristics: they have been or are about to be excluded from a mainstream school; they have a statement of special educational needs (SEN)/ an Education, health and care plan (EHC); they have social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH) they are in care; they have been out of education for significant periods of time.

Barriers to Learning

Through consultation we looked at the various situations that had caused students not to thrive in previous educational establishments and found many common strands. These became known as the “barriers to learning”.

By consciously removing these barriers we have created an environment that is both non-confrontational and relaxed, whilst also being warm and supportive. This environment allows students to feel they can confidently engage and participate.

By transforming the way an educational provision looks, the way we deliver the curriculum, and the way we deal with young people, we expect to transform the outcomes.

Each student is provided with a personalised and bespoke learning package built around his or her particular interests and including the core subjects of Maths, English, IT and Science.

Our experience has shown us that poor behaviour is often the result of environmental factors outside students’ control that influence the way they approach and deal with situations. These environmental factors may have been created unwittingly by other learning providers. Therefore, we have made a conscious decision to remove these barriers to learning and to create an atmosphere where students are able to achieve, both educationally and personally, regardless of ability and background.

Our aim is to create a caring, reassuring and stimulating learning environment where good, respectful behaviour is modelled and expected by all. Our multi-professional team aims to teach students the life skills they need to be able to develop independence and confidence, while also supporting and encouraging strong educational achievement

Values

Our values are stated clearly through the school’s mission statement:

“our mission is to give the most challenged and challenging pupils and young people the educational, social and vocational skills to enable the move into society built on a sustainable model’

Exceed Expectations – when pupils are referred to Norton College, most of them will be struggling to achieve in mainstream due to their learning difficulties, disabilities or emotional and social skills issues. When they join the Norton College family most pupils have low self-esteem and the belief that they cannot achieve as well as others. Our aim is to rebuild their confidence and demonstrate that they can achieve their full potential and produce better results than expected. Through the work of our skilled tutors our pupils consistently exceed their expectations and those of society by achieving outcomes which are exceptional considering their starting point.

Respect for all – To promote an appreciation of diversity and good citizenship, the Headteacher, SMT, Directors and staff and the staff of Norton College show respect for all. Pupils feel valued and that feeling initiates their journey towards gaining back their confidence and self-respect. Respect is an almost tangible aspect of our school ethos and coupled with excellent support it is the reason why our pupils' overall development is so outstanding.

Challenge conventional wisdom – As an alternative provision it is expected that we operate in a manner which is different from mainstream schools, giving pupils who have severe learning difficulties, challenging behaviour and other social issues a real chance to achieve as well as their peers. At Norton College our teaching methods, the activities we use to deliver the curriculum, the way we relate to our pupils, the support we provide for our pupils is unique. We challenge conventional ways of working in everything we do, thus offering a bespoke individualised curriculum, always with the objective of building our pupils' confidence and supporting them as they achieve exceptional results.

Curriculum Principles

- The subject matter should be appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils
- Pupils should develop speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills
- The curriculum should fulfil the requirements of each pupils statement of SEN or Education Health and Care plan (EHC)
- The curriculum should include personal, social and health education (PSHE)
- The curriculum should lead to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils
- The curriculum should promote the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- The curriculum should provide appropriate careers guidance for pupils
- The curriculum should provide pupils the opportunity to learn and make progress
- The curriculum should provide adequate preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life

- The curriculum should inspire pupils to achieve much more than they originally believed they could achieve

The Curriculum

Subjects and Activities Available

Qualification Activity Awarding Body Levels Available

Functional Skills English Edexcel E1; E2; E3; L1; L2

Functional Skills Mathematics Edexcel E1; E2; E3; L1; L2

Functional Skills ICT Edexcel E1; E2; E3; L1; L2

Entry level Science AQA E1; E2; E3

Entry Level Art Edexcel L1, L2

Science OCR GCSE

Maths Edexcel GCSE

English Edexcel IGCSE

Geography Edexcel GCSE

Religious Studies Edexcel GCSE

Statistics Edexcel GCSE

Certificate in Construction Crafts - Bricklaying NOCN L1

Certificate in Construction Crafts - Carpentry NOCN L1

Certificate in Construction Crafts - Plastering NOCN L1

Certificate in Construction Crafts - Painting & Decorating NOCN L1

Certificate in Digital Animation NFER L1

Certificate in Catering NOCN L1

Non – Qualification Activities

Work Placement – for Year 11 pupils

Work/College Preparation – for Year 11 pupils

Information Advice and Guidance

Sports

Enrichment Activities

Educational Visits

Music Technology

Japanese

Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural Skills and the promotion of Fundamental British Values

Citizenship

Personal, Social and Health Education

Planning

- A central collection of schemes of work for the subjects available at our school is available to all staff as a hard copy and on the school's intranet and company share drive.
- The schemes of work are meant to offer guidance about teaching strategies, learning activities, resources, methods of assessment and differentiation for all the subjects we offer. The schemes of work also help tutors with ideas of how they can make links across the curriculum subjects and in particular with spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills(SMSC); citizenship; personal, social and health education (PSHE)
- Staff are supplied with student 'I Can Sheets', Target sheets and Tracking sheets to build into a planning format for educational sessions
- Tracking information is compiled in student files and on the college's central student database

Delivery of the Curriculum

The curriculum at Norton College is delivered at a pace and style that is appropriate for the individual learner.

- 1 to 1 Educational sessions with a tutor or teacher on college site
- 1 to 1 Educational sessions with a tutor or pastoral worker off the college site
- Twilight sessions for anxious students
- Home study packages
- Vocational activities
- Adapted sessions

English & Mathematics

At Norton College we have adopted the government's commitment to ensure that all children, young people and adults, whatever their learning route, should be equipped with the functional English, mathematics and ICT skills needed for success in further learning, in employment and adult life in general.

- English & mathematics skills will be developed during Functional Skills sessions and across the curriculum embedded in other subjects and learning activities. During observation of teaching, learning and assessment observers monitor the development of Functional Skills across the curriculum.
- These subjects form part of the “Core Curriculum” for pupils at the school and pupils’ achievement of both English and mathematics qualifications is one of the school’s key measures of attainment
- Pupil’s progress in English and mathematics is another one of the key measures of attainment at Norton College.
- Pupils’ achievement of level 1 and 2 qualifications in English and mathematics is another key measure of attainment, introduced to ensure that we stretch and challenge pupils even if they are join us as low-attainers.
- Accurate initial assessment at the beginning of each pupil’s programme is combined with diagnostic assessment to identify the starting point for each pupil in English and maths and highlight the areas they need to improve in order to make progress. Tutors then focus on those areas and track the pupil’s progress towards achieving a qualification. The initial assessment is completed at the beginning of every year.

British Values; SMSC and Therapy

The school promotes the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs across the curriculum in order to develop the following amongst pupils:

- an understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process;
- an appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their wellbeing and safety
- an understanding that there is a separation of power between the executive and the judiciary, and that while some public bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account through Parliament, others such as the courts maintain independence;
- an understanding that the freedom to choose and hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law;
- an acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour; and
- an understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination

SMSC is developed across the curriculum by embedding it in various subjects and learning activities. Through the development of SMSC we aim to:

- enable students to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;

- enable students to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;
- encourage students to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and to understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely;
- enable students to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;
- further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling students to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;
- encourage respect for other people; and
- encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic processes, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.

Character building skills

**Being ready to learn... Being a resourceful learner... Being a responsible learner...
Being resilient... Being reflective**

All students are assessed against the five 'Character building' areas for learning. This highlights their areas of strength and indicates target areas for the pastoral team and teaching team to work upon; thus enabling the students to access learning opportunities with greater ability and self-confidence.

Support for Special Educational Needs

Special educational needs (SEN) affect a child's ability to learn and access the full curriculum. Roughly 65% of our pupils have a diagnosis of Autism or ASD, ADHD, PDA or attachment and anxiety issues. As such Norton College has members of the SMT who are SEN professionals who manage our provision for pupils and young people with SEN

- All pupils with a statement of SEN or Education Health and Care (EHC) plan undergoes a process of review and target setting. Each pupil's Year Plan and Individual Education Plan is compiled using recommendations from their statement, background information from SENAR and parents/carers and the expertise of the SEN professional
- The college conducts Dyslexia assessments for pupils. Dyslexia is a Specific Learning Difficulty which affects learning literacy skills which can affect anyone of any age. If diagnosed with dyslexia, an individualised teaching/learning programme is then prepared to reinforce literacy skills.

Support for Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties (SEMH)

Social, emotional and mental health difficulties can prevent pupils from accessing the curriculum.

- Management and staff at Norton College are committed to removing barriers to learning and encourage pupils and young people to achieve and “exceed expectations”.
- All staff members are encouraged to employ a preventative approach when it comes to behaviour, maintaining an awareness of each learner’s specific needs and following the relevant support strategies that limit the incidence of disruptive behaviour. In addition, staff actively promote and reward good behaviour using the “Points System” which is described in our Code of Conduct policy
- Management and staff also work closely with support organisations such as the Behaviour Support Service (BSS), Child and Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to provide additional support for pupils who need it.

Pastoral Care

- Tutors, Teachers and the Pastoral team offer advice and guidance on a 1 to 1 basis regularly. Pupils and young people are encouraged to approach tutors with their concerns as they arise

Monitoring & Review

The curriculum is reviewed once a year or when relevant government policies that influence the curriculum are introduced

- The annual curriculum review involves an analysis of subject success rates; tutors feedback on what works and what needs improvement; the resources or training requirements of tutors
- The observation of teaching, learning and assessment serves not only to monitor the quality of teaching but the suitability of the curriculum to pupil’s needs

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Teaching and Learning policy; Assessment policy.